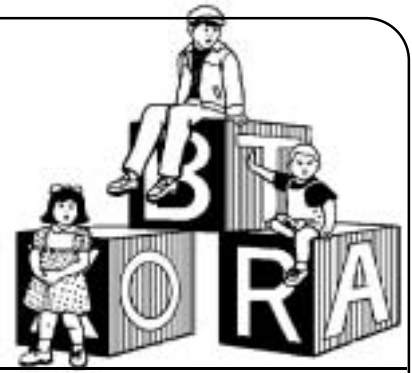


Building Blocks to Safety

A newsletter for prevention of childhood injuries



North Dakota Department of Health

Spring 2005

Division of Injury Prevention and Control

10 Steps to Playgrounds for Children

Going to the playground is a fun and healthy experience for both parents and children. However, there has been a dramatic increase in playground-related injuries over the past two decades. According to U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) statistics, it is estimated that nearly 200,000 playground-related injuries requiring emergency room visits occur each year. About 150,000 of those injuries occur on public playgrounds.

Because many injuries are associated with inadequate supervision on playgrounds, the National Program for Playground Safety (NPPS) highly recommends that parents and caregivers become proactive in playground supervision. Parents and caregivers should visually inspect the equipment for potential safety problems and make sure that children do not play on any unsafe equipment.

The NPPS recommends the following 10 ways **YOU** can make America's playgrounds safer.

1. **Make sure adult supervision is present at the playground.** It is estimated that more than 40 percent of playground injuries may be in some way related to inadequate supervision. Adults need to observe children playing, intercede and facilitate play when necessary and be available in case an injury occurs.
2. **Guide children to play on age-appropriate equipment.** Children are developmentally different. Therefore, equipment designed for children ages 5 to 12 is too big for children ages 2 to 5. Children should play only on equipment appropriate for their ages.
3. **Survey the play area and make sure it is free of apparent hazards.** Hazards range from broken glass or metal pieces lying around to playground design that creates congestion among the play equipment where children could collide or fall on each other. Be sure that metal equipment is in shaded areas or has a protective surface to prevent burns.
4. **Check the playground for cushioned surfaces beneath equipment and its fall areas.** Falls to surfaces are responsible for more than 70 percent of the injuries sustained on playgrounds. Hard surfaces such as asphalt, blacktop, concrete, grass, packed dirt or rocks should not be used. Acceptable surfaces include mulch, pea gravel, sand and synthetic surfaces. Loose-fill surfaces need to be pushed back underneath equipment for adequate cushioning if the material has been moved or pushed to the edge of the play area.
5. **Examine equipment such as ladders, platforms and steps.** Climbers and monkey bars have the highest incidence of injury on public playgrounds and need to be supervised closely. If the climber has a platform, it should be surrounded with a guardrail or protective barrier.
6. **Quality of swings.** Swings are the pieces of moving equipment most likely to cause injuries. Swings should have soft seats. Make sure swings are on a separate framework rather than attached to other equipment. Only two swings should be placed in each bay (or framework). Swings should have surfacing area and spacing from other equipment that is twice the height of the pivot or swing hanger in front and in back of the swing seats.

Continued on next page

10 Steps to Safer Playgrounds for Children (continued)

7. **Check out the slides.** Slides should be well anchored and have firm handrails for gripping and steps with good traction. There should be no spaces between the slide platform and the slide bed where strings from clothing could catch and cause strangulation.
8. **Review the seesaw area.** Check to see that there is a soft bumper under the bottom of the seat to cushion the hit to the surface and that all pivot points are covered to prevent pinched fingers.
9. **Inspect the action of merry-go-rounds.** Merry-go-rounds should be anchored firmly into the ground and have handles for children to grasp easily. The surface under the bed of the merry-go-round should be positioned so that children cannot slide underneath. The gearbox should be covered so fingers cannot get caught.
10. **Be a good neighbor.** Be sure to leave the area in as good condition as you found it (or better, if you have noticed problems). Contact the administrator of the play area if you found problems. If an injury occurred, contact the administrator of the play area and report the injury, the condition of the play area at the time and any factors that may have been related to the incident.

What is the CPSC?

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is an independent federal regulatory agency created to protect the public from unreasonable risks of injuries and deaths associated with some 15,000 types of consumer products. An important part of this mission is to inform the public about product hazards. CPSC uses various means to inform the public. These include local and national media coverage, publication of numerous booklets and product alerts, a website, a telephone hotline, the National Injury Information Clearinghouse, CPSC's Public Information Center and responses to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. For more information, visit the CPSC website at www.cpsc.gov.

TV/VCR Carts Recalled



The CPSC and Sauder Woodworking Company are recalling 300,000 TV/VCR carts. The cart can tip over and the television can fall off, posing a risk of serious injury or death if the TV and cart fall on a child.

The recalled carts are white, light brown and light reddish brown; have decorative hardware and trim; and are about 29 inches wide, 17 inches deep and 25 inches high. The recalled carts include models 3355, 6355, 7755, 9855 and 9755, which can be found on the instruction book that came with the cart.

Department, discount and home electronic stores nationwide sold the carts from October 1991 through May 1999. Models 9855 and 9755 were sold exclusively at Target Stores. Consumers should immediately stop using the carts and do the following:

- Remove the television and all contents.
- Turn the cart over and remove the four casters from the bottom of the cart. This will bring the tip-stability of the cart into compliance with the latest industry standards.

Contact Sauder Woodworking Co. at 888.800.6315 to receive a free retrofit kit and safe-use information.

Visit the following websites for more information about product safety and injury prevention:

www.cpsc.gov
www.ndhealth.gov

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Baby Walkers Recalled



CPSC and PlayKids USA Inc. are recalling about 1,600 PlayKids USA baby walkers. The walkers will fit through a standard doorway and are not designed to stop at the edge of a step. Babies using these walkers can be seriously injured or killed if they fall down stairs.

The walkers have eight snap-in wheels; an activity tray with toy wheels, knobs and lights; and a padded fabric seat. The model numbers PLK94STP, PLT95STP, PLK2000RC, PLK95, PLK94, PLK98STP, PLK2000 or PLK300 are on the package and on a sewn-in label on the seat back. The walkers were sold at small independent specialty juvenile retailers nationwide from February 2003 through April 2004.

Consumers should immediately stop using the recalled walkers and contact PlayKids at 718.332.3450 to receive a full refund.

Necklaces Recalled



CPSC and Raymond Geddes Co. Inc. are recalling 155,000 necklaces. The necklaces contain high levels of lead. CPSC regulations ban children's products from containing high levels of lead due to the risk of lead poisoning resulting from contact with these products. The necklaces also contain sharp points, posing a laceration hazard to young children.

The recalled necklaces have medallions in four different designs depicting frogs, dolphins with a small bead on the tail, a sunshine smiley face and an alien face on a starburst. The medallion is on a black rope chain surrounded by a metallic bead with a coil section.

The necklaces were sold through mail order catalogs nationwide and on the Internet from August 1998 through November 2004. Consumers immediately should take these necklaces away from young children and contact the company at 888.431.1722 to receive a refund.

Children's Chairs Recalled



The CPSC and Delta Enterprise Corp are recalling 81,000 director's chairs for children. The chair can inadvertently be misassembled so that the fabric seat can come off the chair's frame and expose metal support rods. If the fabric seat comes off the frame, children can fall or possibly receive lacerations.

The product is a child's director-style chair, constructed of tubular metal with a canvas seat and back. The chairs feature popular characters such as The Wiggles, Dora the Explorer, Spongebob Squarepants and Disney Princesses. Model numbers for these units are TC83536WG, TC83531DO, TC83533PS and TC83532SB. The model number can be found on a label on the leg of the chair.

The chairs were sold at discount department and toy stores nationwide from April 2004 through July 2004. Consumers are advised to stop using the chair immediately and contact Delta Enterprise Corp. at 877.660.3777 to receive a free repair kit consisting of new assembly instructions and four straps that will prevent the fabric seat from coming off.

Baby Bjorn Carriers Recalled

CPSC and Regal Lager Inc. are recalling 49,000 Baby Bjorn Active baby carriers. The back support buckle can detach from the shoulder straps, posing a fall hazard to the baby.

Baby Bjorn Carriers Recalled (continued)



The recalled infant carriers were sold under brand name "Baby Bjorn," which is printed on the front of the carriers and on the black molded plastic back support buckle. Model number 0260 is printed on the car label on the strap of the carrier. The carriers are made of a cotton polyester

blend fabric in black with red piping and blue with white piping. "Baby Carrier Active" is written on the packaging and above the warning label on the carrier.

Specialty retail stores, catalogs and Internet sites sold the carriers from September 2003 through August 2004. Consumers should immediately stop using the carrier and contact Regal Lager at 877.962.8400 to receive instructions for returning the carriers for repair.

Basketball Hoops Recalled

The CPSC and First Team Inc. are recalling 7,600 basketball hoops. The bolt attaching the arm to the vertical post can break, causing the backboard to fall and injure someone standing below. The recall involves First Team Attack, Force and Titan basketball hoops. The hoops have a spring-loaded, E-Z crank adjustable backboard that goes from 6-feet to 10-feet tall. "First Team" is written on the bottom left corner of the clear acrylic or tempered glass backboard.

The basketball hoops were sold through Internet sales, distributor and independent retail stores from January 1996 through August 2004. Consumers should stop using their basketball hoops and contact First Team Customer Service at 800.649.3688 to receive a free repair kit.



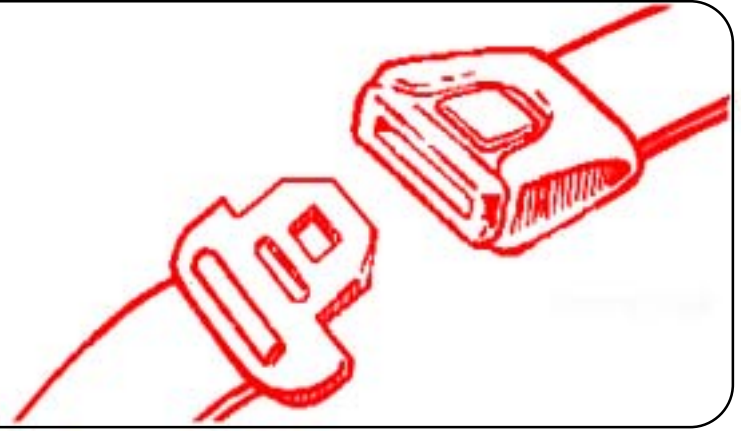
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North Dakota Department of Health
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The Buckle Update



Study: Kids Safest Strapped Into Car's Rear Seat

Children are least likely to be injured in a car crash when they are properly restrained and riding in the back seat, according to a recent study by Reuters Health.

Researchers say the findings support new laws requiring that children who have outgrown child safety seats must ride in belt-positioning booster seats. "However," they report in the March issue of the journal *Pediatrics*, "it is important to note that considerable added benefit would be realized with requirements for rear seating."

For the study, researchers collected data on nearly 18,000 children younger than 16 who were involved in car crashes between 1998 and 2002. Parents provided information about where their children were sitting and what type of restraints they were using at the time of the crash.

A child's position in the car showed its own effect on the risk of serious injury; children riding in the front passenger seat were 40 percent more likely to be injured compared with those riding in the rear seat.

"On the basis of these findings," the authors conclude, "educational campaigns, anticipatory guidance, and legislative interventions should continue to emphasize age-appropriate restraint, but should add an additional focus on the promotion of rear-row seating, with appropriate restraint, for all children (younger than) 13 years of age."

Source: *Pediatrics*, March 2005

Cup Holders, Reading Lights Spice-Up Kids' Car Seats

Adjustable armrests, cup holders, storage slots for video games and overhead lights are becoming standard fare on the new generation of car seats for children.

As more states enact laws requiring older children to use booster seats, manufacturers have added padding, neck pillows, snack holders and slots for toys. Some seats have reversible pads for warm and cold weather and can adjust to the heights of children as they grow.



The design changes are the product of competition in a growing market and the need to appeal to older children as they move from car safety seats into booster seats. There are Toy Story and Hot Wheels seats for boys; Disney Princess and Barbie seats for girls. Baby colors are out. Boys' seats come in bold reds, as well as black and grays, while girls seats are pink and purple.

Twenty-six states have currently upgraded their child passenger safety laws to require restraint use by older children. Most of the children affected by these laws would need to use a booster seat.

DreamRide Car Bed Recalled



The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) announced that Dorel Juvenile Group Inc. (DJG) will conduct a safety recall campaign for certain rear-facing DreamRide child restraint systems. The affected systems are model

22-001 FSM, manufactured between Dec. 1, 2003 and April 28, 2004.

The restraint system did not perform correctly during a NHTSA-mandated compliance test.

Owners are instructed to discontinue use in the rear-facing mode and use the restraint only as a car bed. Car beds allow small infants who are unable to ride in a semi-reclined position because of medical reasons to ride lying down.

Owners who need to use the DreamRide in the rear-facing mode should contact DJG at 866.611.3022 or dreamride@djgusa.com for a free replacement seat. Warning labels for the systems can be requested from DJG.

Mercedes-Benz Recalls Sicartex Kiddy Top Safe Child Restraints

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) announced that Mercedes-Benz is conducting a safety recall campaign of Sicartex Kiddy Top Safe child restraints manufactured from March 1 to Nov. 30, 2003.

The lower attachment arm of the child seat may not be strong enough to hold in the event of a crash. If the child seat is attached to the vehicle with this lower attachment arm, the seat could detach from the vehicle and cause serious injury to the child occupant.

Owners should immediately replace this seat with an appropriate new child seat and return their Kiddy Top Safe child seat to any authorized Mercedes-Benz dealer for a full refund. The vehicle's seat belt should be used to secure the child seat until a replacement seat is obtained. Consumers should mention Recall Campaign #2004 12005.

